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GENERAL NOTES.

A Bright Meteor.—Dr. G. K. GILBERT, of the U. S. Geological Survey, has sent a memorandum of a bright meteor seen by him at 9:40 P. M. on April 4, 1909, at Berkeley, California. From a sketch furnished by the observer it is shown that the meteor appeared some ten degrees below *Alioth* (ϵ *Ursæ Majoris*), moved downward and toward the west, disappearing behind the Berkeley hills some distance west of Grizzly Peak, at a point which would make nearly an equilateral triangle with *Alioth* and *Polaris*. This point was probably very close to the head of the *Dragon*. Dr. GILBERT's notes concerning the meteor are as follows: "Seen from campus, near athletic field, Berkeley, California. Motion slow. Meteor increased in brilliancy as it descended and also divided so as to make a cluster. Train distinct but much less persistent than those of the *Perseids*. Train yellower than the meteor. Diameter of cluster before disappearing behind hills about one tenth of Moon. A meteor as bright as *Venus* was seen the previous evening."

Compendium of Variable Stars.—At the last meeting of the Astronomische Gesellschaft Rev. Father J. G. HAGEN, S. J., announced the preparation, in collaboration with Dr. STEIN, of a book on variable stars, under the title, "Ein Lehrbuch der veränderlichen Sterne." The book is to consist of two parts, a technical part to be prepared by Mr. HAGEN and a theoretical part to be prepared by Mr. STEIN.

The technical part is to be treated under three heads—statistics, methods of observing, and methods of reduction,—and each of these is to be treated under several sub-heads. The theoretical part is to be devoted to the several theories which have been advanced to explain the phenomena of variable stars. These are to be treated under two general heads—first, those referring to single stars, and, second, those referring to double or multiple stars.

The above information is taken from a rather elaborate outline of the contents of the proposed book given in the *Vierteljahrsschrift der Astronomischen Gesellschaft*, **43**, part 4. This book will, we feel sure, be of great interest to variable

star workers, and the reputations of the authors guarantee that the work will be executed with great care and scientific accuracy.

S. D. T.

Notes from "Science."—Professor H. G. VAN DE SANDE BAKHUYZEN has retired from the directorship of the Leyden Observatory and is succeeded by Mr. E. F. VAN DE SANDE BAKHUYZEN.

Dr. MAX WOLF has been appointed director of the observatory at Heidelberg in succession to Dr. WILHELM VALENTINER, who has retired owing to ill health.

Dr. HERMANN KOBOLD has been called from Kiel, to a professorship of astronomy at Berlin.

Professor GEORGE E. HALE, director of the Mount Wilson Solar Observatory, has been elected a foreign member of the Royal Society.

A geodetic survey department for Canada has been established under Dr. W. F. KING, chief astronomer of the Dominion.

National Academy.—At the annual meeting of the National Academy of Sciences held in Washington during the latter part of April two papers upon astronomical subjects were presented: "The Nature and Possible Origin of the Milky Way," by G. C. COMSTOCK; and "Determinations of Stellar Parallax from Photographs Made by ARTHUR R. HINKS and the Writer," by H. N. RUSSEL (introduced by G. C. COMSTOCK). An abstract of Professor COMSTOCK's paper has been printed in the number of *Science* issued on May 21st.

Four California astronomers took part in the Astrographic Chart Conference at Paris, April 19th,—Professors HALE, LEUSCHNER, PERRINE, and RITCHEY.

There is an interesting article in the May number of *Observatory*, by Professor WHITTAKER, Astronomer Royal of Ireland, on "The Professional Training of Astronomers." The article was intended to be suggestive to university students of astronomy and their teachers, but will also interest amateurs who desire to equip themselves for astronomical study. The periodical is in the Society library.